

Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Farajajé

Provost

Professor of Islamic Studies and Cultural Studies

Core Doctoral Faculty, Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions
(Graduate Theological Union)

Senior Research Analyst, Center for Islamic Studies
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1995-present

Starr King School for the Ministry, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA – Professor of Islamic Studies and Cultural Studies

Acting President (2011-2012)

Provost of Starr King School for the Ministry (2009-present)

Senior Research Analyst, Graduate Theological Union Center for Islamic Studies (2007-present)

In Charge of Development and Implementation of New Educational Model – Counter-oppressive/multi-religious/multi-locational/multi-modal thea/ological education (2005-present)

Member, Core Doctoral Faculty (Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions), Graduate Theological Union (1996-present)

Director, SKSM Luce Project For Multi-Religious Studies In Theological Education (funded by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation) (2005-2008)

Convenor, PhD Department for Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions, Graduate Theological Union (2005)

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (2004-2009)

Chair, GTU Islamic Studies Task Force (2001-2006)

Dean of the Faculty (2000-2007)

1986-1996

Howard University School of Divinity, Washington, DC
Professor, History of Religions and Sociology of Religion

- 1978-1983 **Institut des Sciences Bibliques, University of Lausanne, Switzerland**
Senior researcher and teaching assistant, Near Eastern Religions, Early Judaism, Early Christianity and Graeco-Roman religions:
Specialisations: Samaritanism and Ethiopian Healing Scrolls
- 1977-1985 **World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland**
Consultant, Faith and Order Unit (Theological and Interreligious Issues)
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EDUCATION

- 1986 Dr. Theol. *magna cum laude*.
University of Bern (Switzerland).
Dissertation: "In Search of Zion: Spiritual Significance of 'Africa' for Three Black Religious Movements"
- 1975-1976 Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome
Studies in Targum, midrash, Rabbinic literature, history of Palestinian cartography
- 1975 M.Div., *magna cum laude*
St. Vladimir's Seminary, New York
Eastern Christian Studies (Coptic, Ethiopian, Syriac, Indian, Russian Orthodox studies)
- 1972 B.A. with General Honours in Religion
Vassar College, New York; winner of Elizabeth Skinner Hubbard Fellowship for Graduate Study in Religion.
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ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 2011-present Named member of the Swami Abhishiktananda (Henri LeSaux, OSB) Archives Editorial Board (Rishikesh and Delhi, India) with responsibilities for French-English translations and editions.
- 2010-present Development of the SKSM Symposia: a time for critical decolonial pedagogical work in community, bringing together into one place all parts of the SKSM communities
- 2005-present Development and Implementation of Starr King's New Educational Model and Emergent Educational Practices:

Immersion studies (Rome, Italy; Istanbul and Konya, Turkey)
Low-residence modalities
Intensives
Part-time Core Faculty
On-line Education
Video conferencing for Staff, Faculty, Board of Trustees meetings
- 2009 Second Rumi Immersion

- 2008 Rumi Immersion: Pilgrimage of Starr King/GTU students to Konya, Turkey and immersion (2-week intensive) in Jewish, Christian, Muslim experiences of Turkey.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS/ARTISTIC PRODUCTIONS

- 2008-present: Shirin Anne video project: Shirin Anne (Mother Shirin) is the head of a women's Sufi community in Istanbul. (forthcoming)
- 2010 "Beyond the Borders of Duality," in IVRI: The Essence of Hebrew Spirituality: 21st Century Perspectives on an Ancient Tradition;
- 2003 Farajajé, Ibrahim and D.A. Dezern. "Oceans of Mercy: African American Sufi Muslims in the San Francisco Bay Area." Video documentary.
- 1991 Davis, Kortright and E. Farajajé-Jones, Eds. *African Creative Expressions of the Divine*. Washington, DC: Howard University Press.
- 1990 Farajajé-Jones, E. *In Search of Zion: The Spiritual Significance of Africa For Three Black Religious Movements*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang Publishing.
- 1988 Farajajé-Jones, E. "Conviction: A Healing Stream." Co-directed and produced first gospel performance piece to address the issue of Black religious communities' refusal to bury those who had died from HIV-related complications.
- 1987 Farajajé-Jones, E. "Other Voices." Creative director and host for 13-part TV series for Howard University's PBS-affiliate WHMM on religion in Black communities in the United States.

SELECTED CONFERENCES AND OTHER SPEAKING/TEACHING/RESEARCH ENGAGEMENTS

- 2011 ALEPH Rabbinical Studies Programme: Week-long Summer Intensive Course on the Figure of Abraham in Jewish and Islamic Mysticism
- 2011 "Return Again: Of Pomegranates, Gates of Wisdom and Mixed Multitudes"; Keynote Address for the Unitarian Universalists for Jewish Awareness
- 2010 "Spiritual Fluidities: Towards Multi-Religious Thea/ological Education" Starr King President's Lecture at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly
- 2010 Co-leader of Multi-Religious Liberatory Pesach Seder, Chochmat haLev, Berkeley, CA
- 2010 Course on forgiveness in Kabbalah and Sufism, co-taught with Professor Estelle Frankel, Chochmat haLev, Berkeley, CA
- 2005 Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari), Oakland, Ca: "Towards an Islamic Theology of Liberation for the 21st Century.
- Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari), Oakland, Ca: "Everyday is Ashura; every land is Kərbela."

Ministry for Habous and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco, Rabat, Morocco: Developed PhD Programme in Inter-religious Studies for Muslim religious leaders (June-November 2005).

- 2004 Imani Community Church in Oakland: "Hajjar's Children: On the historical relationship between Islam and Christianity in the African American community."

Keynote address for 15th Annual Harlem Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS in New York City: "Hajjar (as) as model for building sustainable communities for combating HIV/AIDS in Latino and African American Muslim, Christian, and Traditional Religions Communities."

Paper for the Theological Roundtable on Ecological Ethics and Spirituality (TREES) at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA: "Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice from an intersectional Muslim perspective."

Prayers for "Imaging Peace," an Interfaith GTU Consortial event to mark the one year anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq as another appropriate time to reflect and think, pray, consider peace in the future.

Paper on "Paradise Bodies/Paradise Consciousness" at the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness' (a section of the American Anthropological Association) Conference: "Altered Bodies/Altered Minds" at University of California at Berkeley. (This paper examines the use of breathing and movement techniques in the dhikr as practiced by the Turkish Halveti-Jerrahi Sufi Order).

"Gifts of Al-Andalus" with Mark Evens, the band Za'atar, and members of the GTU community: A service in celebration of the inter-religious heritage of al-Andalus.

Museum Installation at the Badé Museum for "Mediating Islam" class: The installation included objects, text, photographs, clothes, and a TV monitor playing various videos and music, provided a visual/aural/ textural understanding of Muslim daily life in the United States.

Lecture on "Genders & Sexualities in Islam from a transmodern liberatory Perspective" at the Liberation Theologies Conference at University of California, Berkeley.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Mateo: "The historical connections between Islam and Unitarian Universalism."

Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, San Francisco, CA: "*La ilaha ill'allah: There is nothing that exists apart from Ultimate Reality: The History of Islam in African-descent Communities in the United States.*"

Islamic Cultural Centre of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari): "Hajjar: Muslim communities respond to homelessness."

Co-hosted the screening of "Missing Peace: Women of Faith and the Failure of War" with the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies.

Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari), Oakland, Ca:
 "Challenges and obstacles that Muslims face for their spiritual growth in the United States."

Interview for documentary with Israel Alvaren & Arnel Molina (University of California, Berkeley): "Muslim Life after the Patriot Act."

GTU Commencement Speaker: "Mixing it all up: Towards Hip-Hop Epistemologies of Mixities."

2003 "Dissent and Identity: Bosniak/Bosnian Muslim Identities." Earl Morse Wilbur History Colloquium on Dissenting Traditions. Berkeley.

"History of Islam in the United States: A Subversive (Re-) Reading." Pacific Theological Society. Berkeley.

"Oceans of Mercy: African American Naqshbandi and Jerrahi Sufis in the SF Bay Area." Conference on Islam in the United States. UC Berkeley.

"Reversion-to-Islam Narratives." GTU Symposium on Conversion. Berkeley.

"Teaching for Peace in a Time of War: A Muslim Perspective." GTU Faculty Seminar. Berkeley.

Conference Director, GTU Conference: "Religious Pluralism in the 21st Century: Muslim Identities in the Diaspora." Berkeley, California.

2002 "Diversity in San Francisco Bay Area Muslim Communities." Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari), Oakland.

"HIV and Muslim Communities: The Leadership of African American Shi'a and Sunni Women" Pennsylvania African American HIV Summit. Philadelphia.

"Islam in African American and Latino Communities." Annual Ashura Lecture, Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari), Oakland.

"The African Roots of Islam and Sufism in the Americas." Sufi Books. New York.

"Prophet Muhammad (sawaws) as Mystic-Activist." Annual Mawlid Lecture, Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (Ithna 'Ashari). Oakland.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2008 Luce Foundation grant of \$375,000 to the Starr King School for the Ministry in support of my work in educational design resulting in the creation of a M.Div. degree programme focusing on Multi-Religious Theological Education.

2005 Luce Foundation \$350,000 to the Starr King School for the Ministry in support of my work in Islamic Studies.

2004 Award for best documentary: First Place – “New Ways Faith and Film” Festival, Berkeley, California. Screening of “Oceans of Mercy: African American Sufis in the San Francisco Bay Area.”

FIELD RESEARCH

2010-present Swami Abhishiktananda (Henri LeSaux, OSB) research

2006-present Islam in multireligious/multicultural context (with specific emphasis on Buddhism/Islam, Hinduism/Islam and indigenous religions/Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia)

2005-present Indo-Muslim cultures; Ashura rituals of Delhi; Gender practices and Sufi burial sites in New Delhi

2005-present Turkish Islam; Turkish Sufism; Turkish Jewish ritual arts; Alevism; Bektashism

1986-present Shi’a presence in African-descent communities in the United States

2010 History and architecture of the indigenous Jewish community in Kerala, India

2006 Buddhist/Muslim interactions: Lumbini, Nepal

2005 Sufism in Morocco; Andalusian-Maghribi Muslim/Jewish intersections

2003 Halveti-Jerrahi Tariqat in Istanbul, Turkey
Indigenisation of Islam in Mexico

1986 Sufism in Morocco

1984 Yoruba and Maria Lionza in Caribbean and Venezuela
Islam in Andalusia

Other research travel in Andalucia, Bosnia, China, France, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Syria, Turkey, Turkish Republic of North Cyprus.

SCHOLARLY/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Member, *Collectif Théâtre Onze*. Avant-garde troupe in Lausanne, Switzerland that combined work in ethnography, ethnomusicology, bodywork and performance art.

LANGUAGES

English (first language), Arabic, Aramaic, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Old Slavonic, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Judeo-Espanyol, Judeo-Turkish, Turkish, Ottoman Turkish (beginning).